

# ***PRESS RELEASE***



2nd Floor, Briar Place, Sweet Briar Street  
Port of Spain  
Trinidad & Tobago  
Tel: (868) 822-5567  
Fax: (868) 822-5574

## **EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION**

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### **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Named Cultural Ambassador**

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the NBA's all-time leading goal scorer, whose grandparents are from Trinidad and Tobago, has been named as a global Cultural Ambassador by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

On Wednesday, January 18, Secretary Clinton met with Hall-of-Famer Abdul-Jabbar, who is also a New York Times' best-selling author, to discuss his new role. During the meeting, Secretary Clinton reiterated the United States' strong commitment to engaging young people worldwide and to using people-to-people diplomacy as a means to create opportunities for greater understanding.

Secretary Clinton and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar discussed his upcoming trip to Brazil as a Cultural Ambassador and the strong relationship between the people of the United States and Brazil.

"I am excited and honored to serve my country as a Cultural Ambassador for the U.S. Department of State," said Kareem Abdul-Jabbar who has focused his efforts after his NBA career on engaging youth through socially-minded projects and education. "I look forward to meeting with young people all over the world and discussing ways in which we can strengthen our understanding of one another through education, through sports, and through greater cultural tolerance."

From January 22-28, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar will travel to Brazil to meet with underserved youth in Salvador and Rio de Janeiro. As a Cultural Ambassador, Abdul-Jabbar will lead

conversations with young people on the importance of education, social and racial tolerance, cultural understanding, and using sports as a means of empowerment. In addition, he will participate in basketball clinics with young people in both cities.

Since his retirement in 1989, Abdul-Jabbar has devoted himself to projects focused on African American history and socio-economic justice. His 2011 documentary “On the Shoulders of Giants” sought to highlight these issues. He has also launched the Skyhook Foundation, which works to improve children’s lives through education and sports. In June 2011, Abdul-Jabbar was honored at the White House by President Barack Obama and received the Lincoln Medal from U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder. The medal honors Abdul-Jabbar’s commitment to education and equality which reflects the legacy of President Abraham Lincoln.

More information regarding Abdul-Jabbar’s travel to Brazil will be forthcoming. He will continue his public service as a Cultural Ambassador throughout 2012. Information on upcoming trips will be released at a later date. Stay tuned for updates via Twitter at [@ConnectStateGov](https://twitter.com/ConnectStateGov).

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